

DRUGS THAT DON'T MIX
WITH SUMMER SUN AND HEAT

Janis, who liked to sunbathe and who always tanned easily, was shocked when she developed a severe sunburn after a short time in the sun one morning. The sunburn was accompanied by intense itching and swelling. Later a rash with "weeping" blisters developed.

John was working in his garden as usual one hot, sunny June day, when suddenly he felt extremely warm, lightheaded, and sick to his stomach. His skin became red and hot to the touch. Instead of going indoors, he continued to work. An hour later he was in a hospital, where he almost died of heat stroke.

Why did Janis and John experience such unusual reactions during activities they normally engaged in? In both cases, the answer is that they had taken certain medications that made them highly sensitive to sun and heat.

There are a number of medications that can increase the user's sensitivity to sun, heat or both. In some cases heat can in turn make the patient more sensitive to the drug.

In the chart below are some drugs that may cause sensitivity to the sun (indicated by S) or affect how your body reacts to heat (indicated by H).

These drugs do not cause sun and/or heat sensitivity in everyone who takes them, nor does a reaction necessarily occur the first time the drug is used. But when there is a reaction, it can be a serious one. If you experience unusual symptoms, talk with your doctor about changing to another drug or lowering the dosage. If this isn't possible, you will have to be careful -

DRUG	USE	POTENTIAL DANGER
Amitriptyline S	Antidepressant	Photosensitivity
Atropine H	Antispasmodic	May cause heat stroke
Chlordiazepoxide S/H	Mild tranquilizer	Photosensitivity, possible overdose
Chlorothiazide S/H	Antihypertensive and Diuretic	Photosensitivity, excessive water loss and salt loss
Chlorthalidone S/H	Antihypertensive and Diuretic	Photosensitivity, excessive water and salt loss
Clidinium H	Antispasmodic	Impairs heat regulation
Clorazepate H	Tranquilizer	Reduces urine volume
Diazepam (Valium) H	Tranquilizer	Excessive sweating may cause overdose
Dicyclomine H	Antispasmodic	Heat increases heat-stroke risk
Doxycycline S	Antibiotic	Photosensitivity
Estrogen S	Female sex hormone	Photosensitivity
Furosemide S/H	Antihypertensive	Photosensitivity, heat stroke possible
Griseofulvin S	Antibiotic	Photosensitivity
Hydrochlorothiazide S/H	Antihypertensive	Photosensitivity, excess water loss
Imipramine S/H	Antidepressant	Photosensitivity, increases heat-stroke risk
Lithium H	Tranquilizer	Excess sweating causes toxic reaction
Minocycline S	Antibiotic	Photosensitivity
Oral contraceptives S	Female sex hormones	Photosensitivity
Oxytetracycline S	Antibiotic	Photosensitivity
Propranolol H	Antispasmodic	Reduces sweating
Sulfisoxazole S	Anti-infective	Photosensitivity
Tetracycline S	Antibiotic	Photosensitivity
Thyroxine H	Thyroid hormone	Decreases tolerance for heat
Triprolidine (Actifed) S	Antihistamine	Photosensitivity

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especially in warm environments: Stay out of the sun, avoid exertion, and try to keep as cool as possible.

If you have further questions, feel free to call the Student Health Center Pharmacy. Their number is 686-4454.

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